



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 13

c/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 530 SOUTH KING STREET ROOM 400 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96813
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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MAY 4, 2006 PAUAHI COMMUNITY CENTER

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chair Matusow at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alvin Au, Richard Brawley, Lynne Matusow, Carl Middleton, Dolores Mollring, Karl Rhoads, Tom Smyth, Burton White, Stanford Yuen.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

GUESTS: Daniel Constancio, Ming Lok, Jessica McDunn (Hawaii Pacific University), Deven Nekoba (Board of Water Supply), Kris Larssen, Sue Berg (Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland), Senator Gordon Trimble, Representative Bev Harbin, Sgt. Somera (HPD), Capt. R. Yoshimoto, Firefighter A. Moriguchi (HFD, Central Station), Lawrence Spurgeon (Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Quade and Douglas, Inc.), Ed Korybski (Culture and Arts District), Al Canopin (Councilmember Rod Tam's Office), Virginia Young, Collin Wong, Bill Brennan (Mayor's Office), Dean Chu (Neighborhood Commission Office staff).

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS: The members introduced themselves at this time.

REPORTS AND CONCERNS:

HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT – Firefighter Moriguchi reported the following:

1. Last month there were 4 structure, 3 rubbish, and 1 vehicle fire, 110 medical emergencies, 4 search and rescue, 9 miscellaneous calls.
2. The Safety Tip of the Month is "Prepare a fire escape plan. Map out your escape routes with at least two ways out of each room. Designate a location outside of your home where everyone can meet. Know where your closest phone is to call 911."

There were no questions from the Board or guests. Capt. Yoshimoto and Firefighter Moriguchi were thanked for attending the meeting.

HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT – Sgt. Somera reported statistics for last month included 4 robberies, 15 burglaries, 38 unauthorized entry into motor vehicles, 10 auto thefts, 7 aggravated assaults, 36 simple assaults, 175 motor vehicle collisions, 8 DUI, 3 sex assaults, 7 family offenses, 17 drug offenses, 4 graffiti.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. Two of the security cameras are not working, a request for repairs has been made.
2. Illegal drinking is occurring in Smith – Beretania Park as beer bottles have been found under the play apparatus. Follow up will be done.
3. The department is aware of a noise problem coming from a BYOB establishment next to Chinatown Manor. Management has relocated the band from the outside deck and changed hours; all activity is now inside the building.
4. Thanks were expressed for graffiti arrests.
5. Persons have been illegally riding bicycles and skateboards, sometimes very fast, on sidewalks creating a hazard for pedestrians. It was also noted by a bicycle rider that in some areas there is



no option but to ride on the sidewalk as riding in the street too hazardous and that riding on the sidewalk can be done safely.

6. The department will not cut the lock of a bicycle illegally chained to a parking meter, but will issue a citation for it being unregistered. There is a fine that must be paid when the bicycle is registered.
7. It was requested a presentation be made at an upcoming meeting on the crosswalk ordinance and new no smoking laws. Follow up will be done.

Sgt. Somera was thanked for attending the meeting.

CITIZENS PATROL – Mollring reported the patrol witnessed an arrest of a possible drug deal across the street from the Chinatown Police Station and that they have heard about drug dealing problems on Nuuanu Avenue.

HAWAII PACIFIC UNIVERSITY – Jessica McDunn, from Hawaii Pacific University, reported the following:

1. Spring Semester runs January 23 – May 12, Summer Session I begins May 15.
2. HPU Large Coed Cheer Team won its fourth consecutive national title at the NCA competition in April. The HPU Small Coed Cheer Team (consisting of no more than four male cheerleaders) won its second straight national title. The HPU Cheerleading Stunt Group won its second national title in a row. The HPU Dance Team won a national title.
3. Events: a) Spring Graduation is May 17, Waikiki Shell, 6:30 p.m., 750 graduating students, and 100 nursing students, the biggest in history, b) Master of Science in Nursing Information Session, May 10, 5:30 p.m., c) MA in Diplomacy and Military Studies Information Session, May 11, 5:30 p.m., d) MA in Communication Information Session, May 16, 5:30 p.m., e) Teaching English as a Second Language Information Session, May 17, 5:30 p.m., f) Weekend MBA Session, May 18, 5:30 p.m., g) MSIS for Professionals Information Session, May 24, 5:30 p.m., h) Weekend MBA Reception, May 25, 6:00 p.m.
4. There was no security report available at this time.

There were no questions from the Board or guests. McDunn was thanked for attending the meeting.

HONOLULU CULTURE AND ARTS DISTRICT – Korybski reported the following:

1. The Legislature has funded the grant-in-aid for the Hotel Street façade improvement project.
2. The application for the Preserve America Neighborhood designation for Chinatown will be submitted in June. It will be known approximately 60 days afterwards if the application is granted, making federal funds available. A local government designation is still required.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

The National Parks Service makes the local government designation.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS:

COUNCILMEMBER ROD TAM – Al Canopin, from Councilmember Tam's Office, distributed the monthly report and highlighted/added the following:

1. A dedication ceremony for the Pele Street mini park will be arranged. Follow up will be done with Rhoads.

2. Kekaulike Mall will be closed from 10:00 p.m. – 5:00 a.m. Enforcement will begin when signs are posted. A copy of a letter on this matter from the Department of Parks and Recreation to Councilmember Tam was attached to the written report.
3. A request has been made to repair sidewalks on Maunakea Street where gaps between the paving stones are too deep and wide apart creating a tripping hazard. Repairs to a sidewalk on Beretania Street, between Lisbon and Lauhala Streets were to be completed by March 5.
4. Work is being done by the Department of Design and Construction to address flooding concerns at Alakea and Merchant streets.
5. Residents of Marin Tower have requested reserved parking in the building, however, the Department of Facility Maintenance reports the parking is a municipal parking lot and spaces cannot be reserved for residents. The parking operator, Ampco has reduced the number of monthly parking sold to the public, will monitor the lot, and make additional reductions if needed.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

Very large pot holes were reported at Nuuanu Avenue and Beretania Street. Follow up will be done.

Canopin was thanked for attending the meeting.

SENATOR SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND – Sue Berg, from Senator Chun Oakland's Office, distributed a packet of materials and reported the following:

1. The Legislature passed a grant in aid for the Chinatown Culture and Arts District Hotel Street façade improvement project.
2. The packet of materials includes a list of bills passed to date.
3. Following up on a noise complaint on the use of leaf blower at a Maunakea Street building, adjustments have been made by the building's management to limit the blower's use to once a month, and only between 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.
4. There will be graffiti clean up projects following the end of the legislative session. Interested persons may call the office for more information.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

Thanks were extended to Senator Chun Oakland for her work this session, including the grant in aid for the Hotel Street façade improvement project.

Berg was thanked for attending the meeting.

REPRESENTATIVE BEV HARBIN – Representative Harbin reported the following:

1. The current session ended today. Bills of interest included: a) passage of one to allow the State to condemn the Kukui Gardens housing, b) voting down one to assist the City and County of Honolulu in collecting the increase in the general excise tax to fund a mass transit system, c) repeal of the gasoline tax, and d) not passing rate regulation on medical insurance.
2. More attention is being paid to the Downtown area, including work on the Kakaako Makai development and the Kukui Gardens housing.
3. Work has been done with the State Department of Transportation in addressing noise complaints from activities on cruise ships docked in Honolulu Harbor. Smyth noted that Norwegian Cruise Lines ships are not responsible, but rather Island Princess ships.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

No veto overrides have been made this session.

Representative Harbin was thanked for attending the meeting.

SENATOR GORDON TRIMBLE – Senator Trimble reported the following:

1. There is a need to increase the amount of affordable housing. He opposed legislation passed relating to Kukui Gardens, which does not increase the supply.
2. Some of the budget surplus is being spent on education, social programs, and flood damage.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

Some of the accomplishments of the session related to work on energy self sufficiency, and funding for schools and the University of Hawaii.

Senator Trimble was thanked for attending the meeting.

MAYOR'S OFFICE – Bill Brennan, representing the Mayor's Office, reported regarding addressing the homeless problems, the City's position is that the State is better equipped to deal with the problem as it has the resources, including specialized agencies. The City has a role, but the State has the resources and experience.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

Homeless persons need to help themselves too.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

KEKAULIKE MALL STREET LIGHTING – Larssen suggested that shielding be installed on the mall lighting as it is spilling into residences and not doing anything to deter crime, such as drug dealing. She also noted that the number of homeless persons in the area is increasing.

Another area resident noted problems with a bar in this area where there is after hour activity and patrons damaging parked cars.

PUBLIC RESTROOM FACILITIES – Work is being done to develop public restroom facilities in the Downtown/Chinatown area. No specifics were available at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

PROPOSED TRANSIT ROUTES THROUGH DOWNTOWN AREA – Lawrence Spurgeon, from Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Quade and Douglas, consultants to the City on the transit project, addressed the Board and guests. He reported the project is in the alternative analysis phase, where four alternatives are being studied. He briefly reviewed routes in the Downtown/Chinatown area: a) along Beretania and S. King streets, going underground between Nuuanu Stream and Alapai and S. King streets, then elevated on King Street to the University of Hawaii, b) along Hotel Street, going underground between Richards and Alapai streets, along Kawaiahao and Kona streets to the University of Hawaii, c) along Hotel Street, going underground between Richards and Kawaiahao streets, along Waimanu and Kona streets, Kapiolani Boulevard, to the University of Hawaii, d) along Nimitz Highway, Halekauila and Kona Streets, to the University of Hawaii.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. The trains for the system would be quiet, some noise might be detected in nearby basements of tunneled sections, but would be quiet at street level.

2. Tunnels for the project would be two tunnels, side by side, approximately 15 feet in diameter, and built deep enough to avoid existing utility lines. Tunnel boring machines would bore one tunnel shaft in one direction, then bore a second tunnel in the opposite direction.
3. No specifics could be provided at this time about vibration from the tunneling possibly causing damage to buildings, but attention will be paid to this matter, particularly relating to historic buildings. Impacts are also dependent on the technology used in the tunneling, soil conditions, etc. Vibrations from tunneling might be felt 10 – 20 feet away from the tunnels.
4. It was suggested that the system be grade separated, otherwise existing traffic will have adverse impacts on the efficiency of the system.
5. If the system is elevated or tunneled, there will be less noise at street level.
6. Tunneling is expensive, approximately five times the cost of above ground.
7. Trains running at grade can be longer than a city block with proper traffic signal coordination.
8. Capacity could be approximately 400 – 600 persons per train, with 60 – 80 seated, and 200 persons per car with standing passengers.
9. Trains could run approximately every two minutes if there was the demand.
10. Various technologies are being considered, including magnetic levitation, but there is only one, low speed system in operation at this time. This technology is also expensive. Proven technology will be used.
11. Financing is via an increase in the general excise tax that will take effect in January of next year, and federal funding. If no local taxes are collected, no federal funding will be available.
12. An expanded bus system is more flexible, the rail system will not work. One of the alternatives being considered includes expanding the bus system. The only people who will gain from this project are the developers, builders, providers of the equipment; and that the taxpayers will lose.
13. The City Council will be voting on various phases of the project.
14. No modern systems have ever been abandoned, wherever systems have been built, they are being expanded and are essential to the communities they serve.

Spurgeon was thanked for attending the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

PROPOSED RATE INCREASE BY THE BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY – Devon Nekoba, from the Board of Water Supply, distributed material on the proposed rate increase and reported there will be a public hearing on this proposal on May 15, 2:00 p.m., at the Board of Water Supply meeting room. There has been no increase in rates for 11 years and it is needed to deal with increased costs. The proposed increase is for 13 percent the first year.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. It was noted the Board of Water Supply does not charge for water, rather it charges for the delivery of water.
2. Water rates are structured so the more you use, the more you pay, encouraging conservation.

3. Water wasting can be reported by calling 748-5000.

COMPLAINT AGAINST NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD – Smyth reported that there is no time in the 30-day complaint response procedure for another Board meeting. The complaint was filed against the Board by Middleton. **Smyth moved and Mollring seconded that the Board appoint an investigative sub committee of four members to draft and submit a response. The Board members on the investigative sub committee are Smyth, Matusow, Rhoads, White. The motion carried, 8-1.** Middleton opposed.

Middleton stated that he will take this case to court, will prevail, and called for the removal of Matusow as Chair.

The response will be submitted to meet the May 17 deadline set by the Neighborhood Commission Office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 6, 2006 REGULAR MEETING – The following corrections were made:

Page 1, under Request to Name the Pele Street Mini Park for Caesar and Eleanor Gomes Who Owned the Property Before It Was Condemned to Build the H-1, the motion should read "...the City Council to name the Pele Street Mini Park for Caesar and Eleanor Gomes."

The minutes were approved as corrected.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

CHAIR'S REPORT: Chair Matusow reported the following:

STREET CLOSINGS: There were no new street closings to report.

LIQUOR LICENSES – The Board has received applications for: 1) Events International, Special General License, site of former Kaponos's, Aloha Tower Marketplace, Friday, May 5, 5:00 p.m. to midnight for Cinco de Mayo Celebration, 2) Transfer of Sunset Grill license (Restaurant Row), Category 2, Live Music and Dancing, to NTLD Restaurant LLC and change of trade name to Sunset Grill Pacific Rim and Temporary Category 2 license, 3) Retail General License, Chit Chat Sundries and Gifts, 1001, Bishop St.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA:

1. A request has been received from the owner of Club Pauahi, 80 S. Pauahi St., on the agenda to speak about plans to permanently delete a portion the licensed premises and alter the interior of the premises.
2. Election of Board officers for the 2006 – 2007 term.
3. Emergency vehicle sirens.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mollring reported for the month of April the Operating Account balance was \$1125.76, the Publicity Account balance was -\$157.35, and the Refreshment Account balance was \$120.00. Smyth noted the Board spent \$57.00 from the Refreshment Budget for tonight's refreshments. Chair Matusow requested the Neighborhood Commission update the Board's appropriation for its Publicity Budget to reflect the new residential development and increased costs, such as for postage.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION: Chair Matusow reported there is no new information to report on the status of the review of the draft revisions to the Neighborhood Plan.

STATE AFFAIRS: Smyth reported the following:

1. The Kukui Gardens legislation allows the State to condemn the property only if the current owners cannot sustain it to the year 2011, and that the condemnation process though eminent domain, can take years.

2. The Governor has only vetoed five bills so far, the majority of bills were only recently passed. The Governor has 10 days to: sign, veto or let a bill become law passed 10 or more days before the adjournment of the session, and 45 days to do the same for bills passed fewer than 10 days, at or after adjournment.
3. The grant-in-aid for the Hotel Street façade improvement project was approved by the legislature, construction could begin in approximately nine months.
4. Few bills passed will have a direct impact on the Downtown/Chinatown area.
5. A three strikes law was passed.
6. Legislation of interest that did not pass included: to increase penalties for drivers who violate the new pedestrian safety law did not pass, and red light cameras to catch drivers who run red lights.

CITY AFFAIRS: No report.

OAHU METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION – White reported projects of interest discussed at the last meeting included three H-1 widening projects, one additional lane, eastbound, between Middle Street and Vineyard Boulevard, and modification of the westbound Lunalilo on-ramp and Vineyard Boulevard off-ramp.

PUBLIC SAFETY – No report.

CHARTER COMMISSION – Chair Matusow reported that all proposed amendments relating to the Neighborhood Commission have not advanced.

WEED AND SEED – Mollring reported Central Middle School is getting funding for programs to assist Micronesian students, and for translation of materials from English to other languages of to assist parents of students..

TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL INVESTIGATION – No report.

CHINATOWN SUMMIT SPECIAL INVESTIGATION – White reported the Mayor's Chinatown Summit on the revitalization of Chinatown is scheduled for June 22, Hawaii Theatre, 8:00 a.m. He encouraged interested persons to make reservations. White will make reservations. Board members White, Yuen, Smyth, Matusow, and Rhoads as alternate, will attend.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 1.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dean Chu
Neighborhood Assistant

Minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting.